

Applicant: Cornelius, et al.
Serial No.: 10/792,111
Group Art Unit: 3739

PATENT
Docket No.: 21947-304

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Please amend claim 37 as set forth below.

Please add new claims 51-55:

Listing of Claims

1. – 23. (Canceled)

24. (Currently Amended) A positioning device for an ablation tool comprising:

a flexible elongated tube;

a sheath movable back and forth along said elongated tube;

at least two expandable electrode arms;

a flexible conforming strip extending between said at least two expandable electrode arms, said flexible conforming strip being more flexible than each of said at least two expandable electrode arms;

said flexible conforming strip having sufficient flexibility so as to substantially readily conform to the shape of a target ablation site upon contact of said conforming strip with said target ablation site; and

an ablation mechanism included on said conforming strip.

25. (Original) A positioning device according to claim 24, wherein said flexible conforming strip comprises a conforming electrode strip.

26. (Original) A positioning device according to claim 24, wherein a plurality of ablation electrode needles are disposed on said conforming strip.

27. (Original) A positioning device according to claim 24, wherein a plurality of bipolar ablation electrode needles are disposed on said conforming strip.

28. (Original) A positioning device according to claim 24, wherein each of said at least two expandable arms include a distal tip, wherein a tissue fixation needle is disposed on said distal tip of at least one of said expandable arms.

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29. (Previously Presented) A positioning device according to claim 28, wherein a tissue fixation needle is disposed on said distal tip of each of said expandable arms.

30. (Original) A positioning device according to claim 24, wherein one anchoring needle is disposed on said flexible conforming strip.

31. – 36. (Canceled)

37. (Currently amended) A method of positioning an ablation device within a body comprising:

providing an ablation tool having an elongated body and a flexible electrode disposed between at least two arm members on a distal end of said ablation tool, said flexible electrode being more flexible than said at least two arm members;

directing said distal end of said ablation tool to a target tissue area within said body;

expanding said flexible electrode;

contacting said flexible electrode to substantially conform to a surface of said target tissue area;

ablating at least a surface of said target tissue area.

38. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 37 wherein providing an ablation tool includes providing a flexible electrode that has at least two arm members configured to expand said flexible electrode.

39. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 38 wherein the providing of a flexible electrode includes providing a tissue fixation needle on a distal tip of at least one of said at least two arm members.

40. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 39 further comprising extending and retracting said tissue fixation needle from said distal tip.

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41. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 37 wherein the providing of a flexible electrode includes providing a plurality of ablation electrode needles on said flexible electrode.

42. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 37 wherein the providing of a flexible electrode includes providing a plurality of bipolar ablation electrode needles on said flexible electrode.

43. (Currently Amended) An ablation positioning device for ablating target tissue comprising:

an elongated member sized and shaped to be positioned within the lumen of a body, said elongated member including a distal end;

a first arm member disposed on said distal end of said elongated member;

a second arm member disposed on said distal end of said elongated member;
and

a flexible ablation member extending between said first arm member and said second arm member, said flexible ablation member being more flexible than said first arm member and said second arm member;

wherein said flexible ablation member is conformable to at least a part of a shape of said target tissue and to ablate at least a part of said target tissue.

44. (Previously Presented) The ablation positioning device of claim 43 wherein said flexible ablation member includes an electrode strip.

45. (Previously Presented) The ablation positioning device of claim 43 wherein a plurality of electrode needles are disposed on a surface of said flexible ablation member.

46. (Previously Presented) The ablation positioning device of claim 43 wherein a plurality of bipolar electrode needles are disposed on said flexible ablation member.

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47. (Previously Presented) The ablation positioning device of claim 43 wherein said first arm member includes a tissue fixation needle disposed on a distal tip of said first arm member.

48. (Previously Presented) The ablation positioning device of claim 47 wherein said tissue fixation needle is configured to extend and retract from said distal tip.

49. (Previously Presented) The ablation positioning device of claim 47 wherein said second arm member includes a second tissue fixation needle disposed on a second distal tip of said second arm member.

50. (Previously Presented) The ablation positioning device of claim 49 wherein said second tissue fixation needle is configured to extend and retract from said second distal tip.

51. (New) The method of claim 37, further comprising:

pivoting one end of said flexible electrode around an opposite end of said flexible electrode;

contacting said flexible electrode to a new surface of said target tissue area;

ablating said new surface of said target tissue.

52. (New) The method of claim 51, further comprising a repetition of said pivoting, said contacting and said ablating until said target tissue is fully ablated.

53. (New) The method of claim 51, wherein said opposite end of said flexible electrode is fixated in said target tissue with a needle during said pivoting.

54. (New) The method of claim 51, wherein prior to said pivoting, a needle in said opposite end of said flexible electrode is extended to penetrate said target tissue and thereby stabilize said opposite end of said flexible electrode.

55. (New) The method of claim 51, wherein prior to said pivoting, both said end and said opposite end of said flexible electrode are stabilized in said target tissue with a needle.